United Nations E/CN.18/2005/INF/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 February 2005

Original: English

United Nations Forum on Forests
Fifth session
New York, 16-27 May 2005
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*
Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination

Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2005

Information document

Summary

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and other international forums have acknowledged with appreciation the work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests undertaken to promote and facilitate sustainable forest management worldwide. The governing bodies of Partnership member organizations have also supported its work. The present fourth report to the United Nations Forum on Forests describes the joint initiatives and examples of collaborative activities undertaken over the last year, especially those related to implementing the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

Since its establishment, the Partnership has embarked on six major forest initiatives: an online searchable database on funding sources; streamlining forest reporting; an Internet gateway to accessing information worldwide; fostering a common understanding of definitions; a web site; and information-sharing with the Partnership Network. In addition, members work together in a number of areas ranging from policy to technical matters, including forest landscape restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands; conservation of forest biological diversity; national forest programmes; fire; forest law enforcement; and research, with great emphasis on poverty reduction. Related awareness-raising and capacity-building are an integral part of many of the members' activities.

* E/CN.18/2005/1.

05-24997 (E) 180305

In addition, since the United Nations Forum on Forests at its fifth session will review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consider future actions, Framework 2005 includes an assessment of Partnership progress and identifies opportunities for future collaboration among its members. Based on this assessment, members conclude that the Partnership has indeed enhanced cooperation and coordination on forest-related activities. Several factors have contributed to its success, not the least of which are its strong commitment to sustainable forest management and the voluntary and informal nature of its operation. However, members also acknowledge the need to further strengthen cooperation at all levels and mobilize additional financial resources to implement internationally agreed actions on forests.

Partnership members stand ready in their commitment to working together to support improved management and conservation of forests and forest-based sustainable development and thereby also contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Partnership intends to play a significant role in the future international arrangement on forests.

Contents

		Paragraphs	*Page*
	Introduction	1–2	3
I.	Support of the governing bodies of the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests	3–4	3
II.	Partnership support to implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action: joint initiatives	5–16	4
III.	Collaborative activities	17–35	6
IV.	Assessment of progress	36–40	14
V.	Outlook for the future	41–45	15
Annex			
	Collaborative Partnership on Forests assessment of progress		17

Introduction

1. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests wishes to express its sincere appreciation to countries and international forums for the extent to which they openly recognize its contributions to implementing sustainable forest management worldwide. The voluntary and informal nature of the partnership, its flexible working modalities[1] and the strong commitment of all 14 members[2] to improving coordination and cooperation on forest issues at all levels are making differences on the ground. Building on the comparative advantages of each member, the Partnership is also actively supporting efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the targets and indicators related to Goals 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

2. The present fourth progress report highlights the Partnership's support provided to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests, in particular its joint initiatives to help countries implement the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests; assesses the work that it has carried out to date; and identifies potential opportunities for increased collaboration in the future.

I. Support of the governing bodies of the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

3. Many Partnership governing bodies to which individual members report have endorsed the participation of their senior executives in the Partnership and support to the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests. These include the Committee on Forestry and the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Tropical Timber Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,[3] to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[4] and to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[5] the Board of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), the Board of Trustees of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and of the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank and the Third World Conservation Congress of the World Conservation Union (IUCN).

4. Support includes mobilizing resources for countries to implement the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests; facilitating the flow of information from global to national levels and vice versa; engaging in joint approaches and activities; and securing the means for Partnership members to implement their forest-related work programmes. By way of further support, FAO, UNEP and ITTO continued to second staff to the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat in 2004.

II. Partnership support to implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action: joint initiatives

5. Welcoming and responding to the guidance of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Partnership has established a number of joint initiatives: an online database of funding sources for sustainable forest management (Sourcebook); streamlining reporting on forests (Task Force); a Global Forest Information Service (GFIS); fostering a common understanding of forest-related definitions; information dissemination; and interface with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Network.

Sourcebook on Funding for Sustainable Forest Management

6. The Partnership Sourcebook on Funding for Sustainable Forest Management[6] makes information on foreign and domestic funds accessible through an online searchable database. In the past year, its information capacity has grown from 360 to nearly 500 potential sources of funding for forest activities including how to develop project proposals. It also provides an online forum to which queries may be submitted and where information may be shared on funding matters. The Partnership collaborates with the National Forest Programme Facility and members of the Partnership Network to improve and disseminate the Sourcebook. Feedback from users around the world indicates that the Sourcebook is matching people seeking funds with those who can provide help. FAO maintains the Sourcebook and expects to release an updated version by May 2005.

Task Force on Streamlining Forest-Related Reporting

7. As part of efforts by the Partnership to streamline reporting on forests, it established an Internet portal[7] to provide easy access to information that countries submit to forest-related international processes and organizations. Building on this initiative, FAO, ITTO, UNEP and the secretariats of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Convention on Biodiversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are developing a framework for forest reporting within which to coordinate and improve access to information with a view to reducing the reporting burden on countries and to harmonizing their information requests. Reported information would be searchable by country, by process and by thematic elements of sustainable forest management. In 2005, the Task Force plans to further elaborate this approach and test it in practice. Feedback will be sought through a small expert meeting of Task Force members and national focal points responsible for reporting from a few interested countries, scheduled in April 2005 in New York, as well as through side events in the Forum and other forums. Members are grateful for the financial support provided by a number of Governments to initiating this challenging task. Many Partnership members are also assisting countries in strengthening their capacity for data collection, processing and reporting, including through improved in-country coordination. Although progress is being made, this area requires further attention.

Global Forest Information Service

8. The most recent initiative, the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS), is an Internet gateway[8] that provides access through a single entry point to forest information from around the world. It provides browsing and metadata search facilities that enable users to locate maps, data sets, articles, books and other material that could facilitate informed decision-making. The provision of information to GFIS builds on the agreements with forest-related institutions giving them wider opportunities to disseminate information. IUFRO leads this initiative and collaborates closely with FAO, CIFOR, the Forum secretariat and other partners. The service is expected to be fully operational when IUFRO presents it at its World Congress in Brisbane, Australia, in August 2005.

Fostering a common understanding of forest-related definitions

9. Given that the consistent use of terms is important to any reporting process, Partnership members have continued to work on harmonizing forest-related definitions. Since 2002, FAO, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, ITTO, CIFOR, IUFRO and UNEP have jointly organized Expert Meetings on Harmonizing Forest-related Definitions for Use by Various Stakeholders. More than 60 experts participated in the third Expert Meeting held in January 2005 in Rome, including several Partnership members that had organized the meetings as well as others, such as ICRAF and the Forum secretariat. The Expert Meeting provided a venue within which to incorporate the interests of various groups such as forest managers, inventorists, people involved in biodiversity, climate change and desertification negotiations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

10. In continuing the harmonization process, the conveners also responded to recommendations made by the Forum at its fourth session. Both the FAO Forest Resources Assessment and ITTO reported that they had implemented most of the relevant recommendations regarding their own definitions and IUFRO had continued its work on multilingual forest terminology (SilvaVoc project). The Expert Meeting made technical recommendations with respect to some terms used by the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[9] the Convention on Biological Diversity, FAO, ITTO and others. It also recommended that the Partnership should consider acting as a custodian for the various forest-related terms and definitions used for reporting to international processes in order to facilitate their harmonization and consistent use.

11. Key terms discussed were natural forest, planted forest, forest plantation, trees outside forests, managed forest and unmanaged forest. There was general, although not unanimous, agreement on definitions for the first three terms and participants reached consensus on the working definition of forest management. It was recognized that the concept of managed and unmanaged that had been adopted during climate change discussions was different from the one traditionally used in forestry.

12. With regard to multilingual aspects of forest-related definitions, participants stressed the need to continue to resolve problems. A report of the proceedings will be published in March 2005.

13. The Partnership web site provides access to the definitions used by its members and a number of other links to thesauri and definition databases, such as the IUFRO clearing house for multilingual forest terminology[10] and the FAO Forest Resources Assessment 2005 Terms and Definitions.[11]

Web site and outreach activities

14. The Partnership web site (www.fao.org/forestry/cpf) contains information about the partnership, its activities and the Network, in addition to a directory of international forest-related organizations. The Forum secretariat maintains the site, in collaboration with FAO.

15. The Partnership often organizes side events in conjunction with major forest gatherings, using the opportunity to make presentations and disseminate information about its joint initiatives.

Collaborative Partnership on Forests Network

16. Over the last few years, many individuals affiliated with international organizations, government agencies and non-governmental organizations have joined the Partnership Network, which is open to all those interested in forest issues. The Network brings together a broad range of expertise, resources and perspectives that can help achieve sustainable forest management and it is working to improve its links at the country level. However, it may need to be revitalized and linked to activities at the country level for more effective networking. The Network shares information on the activities of its members through electronic means and by meeting mainly during Forum sessions. The Forum secretariat distributes the CPF Network Updates regularly.

III. Collaborative activities

17. While several members have worked together for many years, the Partnership has boosted cooperation. The following section highlights examples of recent projects carried out by two or more members. More information is available from www.fao.org/forestry/cpf, including an "Overview of CPF Members' Work on Implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action" and the previous CPF Frameworks.

Forest landscape restoration and rehabilitation of degraded lands

18. Launched in 2003, the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration is a growing network of Governments, international and non-governmental organizations and communities that are working to raise the profile of forest landscape restoration as a model of how to link policy with practice. Several Partnership members participate in the initiative, including IUCN, the Forum secretariat, FAO, ITTO, CIFOR, the Programme on Forests (PROFOR) (hosted by the World Bank), ICRAF, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat. More than a dozen national and regional workshops have been held to share experiences and develop

practical next steps; and several others are planned. An international expert meeting on forest landscape restoration, in support of the Forum, will be convened in 2005 to review lessons learned and plan further coordinated action. In addition, IUCN and ITTO are jointly preparing a practitioner's manual on forest landscape restoration and organizing national workshops on this topic.

19. Several Partnership members are also collaborating in rehabilitation efforts in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami. They are sharing information on impact and needs assessments and are working to coordinate their respective efforts in technical assistance, capacity strengthening, and project support to tsunami-affected countries.

Land degradation assessment

20. FAO and UNEP, with funding from GEF, are implementing a global project on land degradation assessment. UNEP is also collaborating with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification on the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands. The project will develop tools and methods to assess and quantify the nature, extent, severity and impacts of land degradation on ecosystems, watersheds and river basins, carbon storage and biological diversity over a range of spatial and temporal scales. In 2004, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity welcomed the joint work programme with the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification on dry and sub-humid lands.

21. With support from the IUFRO Special Programme for Developing Countries, a team of African scientists synthesized a compilation of activities related to the rehabilitation of degraded lands in Africa which demonstrated the extent to which collaboration and information-sharing among scientists working in different countries and environments could add value to research. In addition, ICRAF, UNEP, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and other partners are working together to restore degraded drylands in West Africa (see box 1). The project aims to prevent further desertification and promotes sustainable land management as an integral part of national development policies, strategies and plans.

Box 1
An ecosystem approach to restoring West African drylands and improving rural livelihoods through agroforestry-based land management interventions

Collaborating organizations: ICRAF, the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, UNEP, University of Florida, national institutions in Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal, and regional networks

The project promotes an integrated approach to sustainably managing the Parkland ecosystems (crop-tree-livestock) of the semi-arid lowlands of West Africa. It builds regional and local capacity to develop policies for restoring the West African Parklands so as to improve human well-being and alleviate poverty. Specifically, the project is expected to (a) build capacity of rural communities in land-use planning and land conservation in the context of agroforestry; (b) train national teams in five countries in quantitative characterization of land degradation and target, evaluate and monitor interventions to conserve agroforestry; (c) locate degraded hot spots in the region and spatially target recommendations on policy and agroforestry practices; (d) produce guidelines and case studies to characterize dryland degradation, targeting interventions and monitoring impacts; and (e) provide guidelines and case studies to improve national and regional policies based on adaptive ecosystem management.

Conservation of forest biological diversity

22. Many Partnership members are collectively addressing the issue of the conservation of forest biological diversity, especially since the adoption of the 2010 global target and the Convention on Biological Diversity expanded work programme on forest biological diversity (annex to decision VI/22 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention). In April 2004, the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change worked to establish the linkages between sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach (Viterbo, Italy); IUCN and the World Bank made a joint submission to the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests; and IUCN hosted a workshop in Gland, Switzerland, in 2004. In 2003, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened a workshop to help clarify the linkages between sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach and to develop guidelines to implement the latter. FAO, ITTO, the Forum secretariat, IUCN, UNDP and UNEP participated actively in discussions. Many Partnership

members also attended the Convention on Biological Diversity workshop on forest protected areas (November 2003) and the First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on the Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity (see UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/20 for the report thereon).

23. ITTO and IUCN are jointly developing a policy framework for transboundary forest conservation and, in 2003, organized an international workshop on the subject in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. The workshop helped raise interest in more than 25 countries and ITTO is now implementing transboundary conservation projects that cover about 10.3 million hectares of tropical forests (see box II).

Box II
Lanjak-Entimau/Betung Kerihun Transboundary Conservation Reserve and other transboundary conservation in Asia

Using its ability to bring countries and donors together on a regular basis, ITTO has established a substantial programme of transboundary reserves that straddle two or more tropical countries. Besides conserving wildlife, transboundary projects seek to improve the livelihoods of forest communities, promote cooperation between neighbouring countries, and control illegal logging and wildlife smuggling.

The first project financed by ITTO was the Lanjak-Entimau/Betung Kerihun Transboundary Conservation Reserve on the island of Borneo, an undertaking that began in 1994 and continues today. In collaboration with the World Wide Fund for Nature (Indonesia), ITTO is funding another project for the management of the Kayan Mentarang National Park. On the Malaysian side, a new ITTO-funded project will help strengthen the management of the recently extended Pulong Tau National Park, which now adjoins Kayan Mentarang. In Thailand, the Phatam Protected Forest Complex, on the border with Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, is benefiting from an ITTO-funded project to strengthen transboundary cooperation in conservation management.

24. UNEP is implementing a GEF-financed project that is focused on the border between the Niger and Nigeria to consolidate cooperation and build institutional capacity to conserve habitats, biodiversity and water resources; achieve sustainable land use; and control degradation. UNDP is working on 29 GEF-funded projects on forest conservation in 27 countries and, in 2003, published experiences and lessons learned in 40 such projects around the world. Some Partnership members are involved in two other projects as well: the Mesoamerica forest conservation project, supported by GEF, the World Bank and UNDP, and the World Bank's project in Brazil's rainforest.

Forest fires

25. Many Partnership members seek to strengthen cooperation in forest fire management, including prevention, preparedness, suppression and rehabilitation. They are working with countries and non-governmental partners to develop and implement policies that reduce the negative effects of wildland fire on humans and the environment; promote fire management in the context of integrated natural resources plans and strategies; and encourage the use of prescribed fire in sustainable land-use systems. In addition, ministers responsible for forests addressed fire issues and the need for better international and regional cooperation at the high-level meeting convened by FAO in March 2005.

26. FAO, UNEP, the secretariats of the Conference on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Forum on Forests, ITTO and the World Bank participate in the Wildland Fire Advisory Group of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. FAO, ITTO, IUCN and the Global Fire Monitoring Centre, among others, are exploring ways to promote community-based fire management (see box III) and several Partnership members are collaborating and exchanging information with regional fire networks.

Box III
Training instructors in community-based fire management in sub-Saharan Africa

Collaborating organizations: FAO, Global Fire Monitoring Centre (GFMC), Global Fire Partnership (IUCN/Nature Conservancy/WWF), United Nations University (UNU), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Regional Subsahara Africa Wildland Fire Network of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the Governments of Finland, Germany and Norway

Nearly half the global area affected by wildland fires is in sub-Saharan Africa and most are human-induced. Given the need to reduce this harmful burning and address the root causes of the fires, the project is training instructors in proactive and participatory fire management and building capacity to use fire as a tool.

Once trained, the UNU-certified instructors will advise government agencies and communities on the complex technical, sociocultural and legislative aspects of community-based fire management, using the knowledge derived from recent African experiences in involving government, local communities and civil society. Training also addresses the legislative and policy constraints associated with transferring management responsibilities from government to communities.

27. IUCN and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), in cooperation with CIFOR, had operated Project FireFight Southeast Asia which concluded in mid-2003. Building on successes, IUCN, WWF, ITTO and the Government of Switzerland extended Project FireFight to West Africa, the Mekong region and the Northern Andes (Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador). IUCN and ITTO are now working with their members and with communities in Ghana to enhance fire management in fire-prone areas with a view to increasing benefits from forest products and to restore fire-damaged lands by planting local species.

National forest programmes and poverty reduction

28. Most Partnership members support countries in implementing national forest programmes and linking these to poverty reduction strategies and the Millennium Development Goals. Two major entities — the National Forest Programme Facility, hosted by FAO, and PROFOR, hosted by the World Bank, specifically support national forest programmes. The Facility supports 36 developing countries in their national forest programme process, with a focus on increasing civil society participation in decision-making and facilitating the implementation of international commitments, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action. In addition, FAO is working with 22 countries to develop and implement programmes, focusing on institutional capacity-building and participatory approaches.

29. CIFOR, ITTO, PROFOR, FAO and the Forum secretariat supported the Workshop on Decentralization, Federal Systems in Forestry and National Forest Programmes, a country-led initiative in support of the Forum, co-sponsored by the Governments of Indonesia and Switzerland and held in April 2004. The Workshop concluded that decentralization in the forest sector was a means to alleviate poverty, promote sustainable economic development and protect the environment. Given the right conditions, which rarely hold, decentralization also enhances efficiency, equity and participation in forest management and conservation.

30. PROFOR has been working with IUCN, CIFOR and others to better integrate forest issues into poverty reduction strategies and government planning. Together they are building a body of knowledge to show how locally and sustainably managed forests can enhance rural livelihoods and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. IUCN and ICRAF are also collaborating on developing a system to sustainably harvest Allanblackia seeds in Ghana, which will enhance local livelihoods (see box IV).

Box IV
Sustainable harvesting and marketing of Allanblackia seeds in Ghana

Collaborating organizations: IUCN, ICRAF, Unilever and local African non-governmental organizations

Partners are developing a system for the economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable harvesting and marketing of Allanblackia seeds in Ghana, a new commodity that can be used as a substitute for oil palm in manufacturing products such as margarine and soaps.

The sustainable wild harvesting of Allanblackia is expected to enhance local livelihoods and act as an incentive for communities to maintain and enhance the integrity of the resource. Unilever will require that harvesters adhere to the best practice guidelines developed by IUCN.

Other benefits will include enhanced integrity of forest landscapes to improve landscape connectivity once Allanblackia is incorporated into farming systems.

Funding has now been secured from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) to broaden implementation in 2005, which should yield valuable lessons on how markets can be made to work to both alleviate poverty and conserve forests.

Forest law enforcement

31. Several Partnership members, including the World Bank, IUCN, CIFOR, ITTO and FAO, are actively involved in the forest law enforcement and governance processes in Asia and Africa. The World Bank and IUCN are also participating in the new Eastern and Northern Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process, with IUCN organizing stakeholder consultations in the north-west and far east regions of the Russian Federation.

32. FAO and ITTO are working on best practices for compliance in the forest sector which are scheduled for publication in mid-2005. Furthermore, the World Bank and FAO are collaborating on the development of a forest law manual to assist Governments, practitioners and other stakeholders in revising or updating forest legislation.

33. IUCN and ITTO convened a workshop on reducing threats from illegal logging and increasing trade in legally produced and traded timber during the Third IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Bangkok in November 2004. During the Congress, IUCN, CIFOR and other partners held a Global Synthesis Workshop on law enforcement and governance of natural resources: implications for livelihoods. Furthermore, CIFOR, the World Bank, ITTO, and FAO assisted the secretariat of the

Convention on Biological Diversity during 2004 on the preparation of the report on the effects of insufficient forest law enforcement on forest biological diversity.

Capacity-building and research

34. Partnership support to forest extension and research in developing countries includes dissemination by CIFOR and ICRAF of the results of forest-related research and the IUFRO Special Programme for Developing Countries which now offers training modules on forest policy, public relations, criteria and indicators, and the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in forest science. IUFRO and FAO support regional research networks, efforts to strengthen forest education and extension systems and the establishment of communities of practices (see box V). In addition, FAO, IUFRO and the Government of Italy organized a symposium on communication strategies through which to involve partners in forestry extension (Orvieto, Italy).

Box V
Forestry Research Network for Sub-Saharan Africa (FORNESSA)

Collaborating organizations: IUFRO, FAO, three subregional forestry research networks (Association of Forestry Research Institutions of East Africa; Forestry Network of the West and Central Africa Agricultural Research and Development; and Research Unit Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector of SADC). Membership extends to all 121 forestry research institutions within countries south of the Sahara Desert

FORNESSA was formally launched in July 2000 to strengthen forestry research for the conservation and sustainable management and utilization of forest resources in sub-Saharan Africa. In the long term, it is expected to become an effective forum for exchanging scientific information and technologies in these areas to enhance rural livelihoods. Major activities of FORNESSA include the scientific networking initiative on "Rehabilitation of degraded lands in Africa", the GFIS Africa project, an analysis of the interaction between government institutions and civil society in the Congo Basin, and multi-stakeholder learning platforms on regional priority issues.

35. Other capacity-building activities being undertaken by Partnership members include UNDP support to developing countries for socio-economic development (Capacity 2015) and FAO, CIFOR and IUCN collaboration on workshops on forests and climate change, especially in Latin America. Over the past two years, UNEP, FAO and IUCN have helped developing countries with technical issues related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations on modalities for forest projects under the Clean Development Mechanism.

IV. Assessment of progress

36. In response to an invitation from the Forum, the Partnership developed criteria to review the effectiveness of its work. The assessment, including details contained in the annex to the present document, complements the Partnership joint response[12] to the voluntary questionnaire on the review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests.

Support to the Forum and member countries

37. Partnership members have supported the Forum and its member countries by providing advisory services, assisting countries in implementing the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, co-sponsoring country- and organization-led initiatives, and carrying out joint initiatives. They have raised awareness of issues related to sustainable forest management and helped develop measures to address problem areas. They have taken action on most proposals targeted to them and have actively participated in Forum sessions and events, including panel discussions, expert groups and the high-level segments. They were also instrumental in contributing to the preparation of several reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Forum at its annual sessions.

Enhancement of collaboration and coordination

38. While many Partnership members have been collaborating over the years, the Partnership has provided an unprecedented opportunity to share information, build trust and foster greater synergies. Members work together more closely than ever before on national forest programmes, decentralization, criteria and indicators, wildfires, mangroves and forest restoration and conservation, just to mention a few areas.

39. The effectiveness of the Partnership is due to its voluntary and informal nature, its manageable size and, above all, the strong commitment of its members to collaborating. All Partnership members share the same aspiration towards better management of the world's forests and better livelihoods for forest-dependent people. Members are also closely aligning their programmes and activities so as to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, Partnership members try to react quickly to emerging issues, for example, by pooling technical support and resources for rehabilitation efforts in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Areas for further development

40. While Partnership members have achieved a great deal in enhancing collaboration, additional efforts are needed to increase regional and national cooperation, mobilize financial resources for action and make forest reporting more effective and less of a burden on countries. The focal agency system has worked

well but could be improved to better support the intergovernmental forest dialogue and minimize duplication and overlaps.

V. Outlook for the future

41. Partnership members recognize the need for a high-level policy dialogue to ensure that forest issues remain in the international agenda. They are committed to maintaining and strengthening the Partnership, specifically to further enhance cooperation and coordination on forest issues and to further strengthen and mobilize support for country efforts to implement internationally agreed actions on forests.

42. Partnership members are ready to further strengthen their efforts, including at the regional and national levels, to support improved management and conservation of forests and forest-based sustainable development, thereby also contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Their prime preoccupation is supporting tangible action on the ground. Awareness-raising and capacity-building are already an integral part of many of the members' activities. High priority is also given to facilitating sharing of experiences among practitioners and stakeholders so as to deepen understanding of forest issues and strengthen political support for sustainable forest management. Members are also committed to enhancing transparency and building stakeholder confidence in the work of the Partnership.

43. Considering that the Partnership is a voluntary one, there is a critical need for external funding to support its joint initiatives — funding that provides maximum flexibility to carry out key forest-related activities within partners' individual programmes of work. Possibilities could include a trust fund for collaborative work, external task-based funding and strengthening members' programmes of work and budgets, or a combination of these.

44. The Forum secretariat has a dual role as a member and as a support service to the Partnership, and members appreciate the assistance it provides. Considering the growing expectations for Partnership activities, the secretariat services to the Partnership need to be strengthened.

45. With regard to the future international arrangement on forests, Partnership members stand ready in their commitment to putting forward maximum efforts towards working together and with countries and other partners to achieve sustainable forest management worldwide and to improve the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion forest-dependent people.

Notes

[1] Described in the Partnership policy document (June 2003) which is available online from www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[2] Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO); International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO); secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF); secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa; secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests; secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; United

Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF); World Bank; and World Conservation Union (IUCN).

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[4] Ibid., vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[5] Ibid., vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[6] The sourcebook is available online from www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-sourcebook and as a CD-ROM. A copy of the CD-ROM can be obtained by contacting FAO directly at CPF-Sourcebook@fao.org.

[7] The portal is available online at www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar.

[8] www.gfis.net.

[9] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

[10] http://www.iufro.org/science/special/silvavoc/silvaterm-database/.

[11] www.fao.org/forestry/site/fra2005-terms/en.

[12] Available from http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/national_reports/unffs/questionnaire/cpf.pdf.

Annex

Collaborative Partnership on Forests assessment of progress

Objectives	*Criteria*	*Progress*
Support to Forum and member countries	Assistance of Partnership members in the preparation of reports of the Secretary-General	All Partnership members have contributed to the preparation of official documentation for Forum sessions by providing substantive and technical inputs and reviewing drafts
	Support to intersessional meetings	Most Partnership members have supported country- and organization-led initiatives and participated actively in the ad hoc expert groups.
	Secondments to Forum secretariat	FAO, ITTO and UNEP have seconded staff to the Forum secretariat
	Strengthened political commitment towards sustainable forest management	Partnership members have secured the strong support of their governing bodies with respect to work towards achieving sustainable forest management, especially at the country level where the Partnership makes concerted efforts to more deeply engage national Governments. All members attended the high-level segment of the Forum's second session, most at the executive level
	Implementing Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action targeted at Partnership members	Most Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals targeted to Partnership members have been or are being carried out
	Facilitating the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action at country level	Several Partnership members have catalysed action at the country level, shared information, helped understand the United Nations texts, organized workshops and provided technical and scientific advice. Some have also provided financial support
	Internal and external resources to implement Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on	Some Partnership members have financial resources to directly support forest projects. As of June 2004, GEF had allocated US$ 822 million, Operational Programme on Forest Ecosystem; US$ 440 million, Operational Programme on Mountain Ecosystems; and US$ 177 million, Operational Programme on Sustainable Land Management. Since its

Objectives	*Criteria*	*Progress*
	Forests proposals for action increased	inception, ITTO has mobilized US$ 250 million to fund more than 500 projects and activities. Between 2002 and 2003, FAO contributed US$ 31 million (regular budget) and US$ 62 million (trust fund and technical cooperation) for forest activities. Since the adoption of its revised forest strategy, World Bank Group (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Development Association, International Finance Corporation) lending for forest management, conservation and development has grown from US$ 61 million in 2001 to an estimated US$ 619 million for 2005
	Assistance in developing the monitoring, assessment and reporting (MAR) function, including a Forum reporting system	Several Partnership members supported the development of a MAR function, in particular by providing technical support to country-led initiatives (Yokohama, Japan, 2001, and Viterbo, Italy, 2003) and the Forum ad hoc expert group on MAR (Geneva, 2003). Partnership members also provided advice to the Forum secretariat in developing national reporting guidelines
	Reaching a common understanding of forest-related definitions	Three expert meetings have worked on harmonizing key forest-related definitions used by various international processes and organizations, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Forum, ITTO, FAO, IUFRO and UNEP
	Streamlining reporting requirements of Partnership members to reduce the reporting burden on countries	Major accomplishments include Partnership reporting portal (web site), use of the thematic elements of sustainable forest management to organize many of the members' reporting formats, and efforts to develop a joint information framework for forest reporting
	Increased quality and accessibility of forest-related information	Partnership web site provides information on Partnership members and initiatives; easy access to individual members' web sites; and information on forest reporting and on funding sources for sustainable forest management. In addition, the Global Forest Information Service includes 130,000 metadata entries
Enhance cooperation and coordination among Partnership members	Annual updating of the Partnership Framework	The Partnership, with the assistance of the Forum secretariat, prepares an annual progress report — the Partnership Framework — for submission to the Forum
	Attendance at and number of meetings	The Partnership has held 13 regular meetings, 5 task force meetings on streamlining forest-related reporting, and 3 expert group meetings on harmonizing definitions

Objectives	*Criteria*	*Progress*
	Collaborative activities	All members have endorsed five joint initiatives and two or more members are collaborating in a number of other areas
	Eliminating overlap and duplication	The Partnership's focal agency system builds on the comparative advantages of individual members to minimize duplication. However, if more Governments sent consistent messages to Partnership governing bodies, synergies would improve and overlaps minimized with regard to reporting on forests and field activities
	Consistent messages from governing bodies on work and support to the Partnership and the Forum	Most governing bodies of Partnership members have recognized the work of the Partnership and the Forum and the growing demand that this has created for their services
	Partnership Network supporting the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action	The Partnership Network has had limited success in supporting the implementation of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action, focusing instead on information-sharing between Partnership members and other stakeholders at international, regional and national levels